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2019

Mouth of The River
Publication of Oyster River High School



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Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that we present our first issue of *Mouth of the River* for the 2019-2020 school year. We hope that you are equally excited to read this year's magazines.

This year's staff looks to uphold the long standing *Mouth of the River* tradition of producing a high caliber publication. We hope that *Mouth of the River* can serve as the Oyster River community's go-to source for issues relating to the Oyster River School District and the greater community.

This issue, our writers have put together a collection of stories ranging from an in depth look at Schoolology, the district's new Learning Management System, to Chase Amarosa's article featuring Oyster River's surfing community.

The cover story, "I'll Do It Later," written by Holly Reid, looks at procrastination and how the habit affects high schoolers. The cover was created and shot by Chase Amarosa, with the help of the magazine's creative team, who beautifully captured a student's perspective on procrastination.

As a publication, *Mouth of the River* has worked hard over the last couple of years to continuously improve our publication and represent a variety of topics and perspectives. As always you can find all of our current and previous stories at mor. news, including our multimedia stories.

Mouth of the River has been lucky to have the support of many businesses in the Oyster River community and looks for continued support. If you wish to become a sponsor or a subscriber of *Mouth of the River* and receive the next issue directly to your door, please email us at mouthoftherivermagazine@gmail.com.

We are proud of this publication and all the hard work each student on staff put in to carefully and thoughtfully create this magazine. We hope that you enjoy reading our first issue as much as we did creating it. Thank you for supporting our publication.

Until next time,

Joe Morrell and Susanna Serrano, Co-Editors in Chief

Meet the Staff

Curated by Arianna Antonelli



Joseph Morrell ('20)

Joe returns from last year's staff as a Co-Editor in Chief. He was the former Social Media and Website Manager and said that returning to MOR, "gave me the ability to be well versed and my ability to help other people and I think as Editor in Chief, you have to be able to know how to do a lot of different people's jobs to help them." He is planning on going to college and is considering playing college basketball to see where that takes him. Joe is the president of Best Buddies and the Student Athlete Leadership Team as well as being a part of the school's basketball, soccer, and tennis teams. He also participates in several other activities in school including National Honor Society, Connect Training, Bystander Training, the Mental Health and Mindfulness club.



Susanna Serrano ('20)

Susanna is a Co-Editor in Chief this year, she is a returning staff member and was the Ads and Subscription Manager last year. She said that she returned to staff because she said she had a great experience last year. She is an avid skier and races for the high school team and the Gunstock Ski Club. Susanna is also on the ORHS softball team and is a part of NHS. She hopes to go to a college that's close to mountains or has a club ski team. She is considering majoring in either political science or American studies in college and then going to law school. Susanna said that being on MOR, "made you stop and think about why you held the opinions that you held and why other people did things the way that they did. I love actually writing something that's for a purpose rather than just for an assignment."



Arianna Antonelli ('21)

Ari is the News Editor for MOR and is hoping to be a journalist after high school. She said, "there's always going to be new news coming out, so we're always going to need somebody to voice what's going on. I think that person giving all the information over is so important." She enjoys writing, skiing, skateboarding, playing electric guitar and bass, and traveling. Ari said she wanted to be on staff because she wants to get a taste of journalism before majoring in it in college. "We need to have somebody to speak for everyone and it's a daunting task, but MOR's been doing it. There's a process behind it and now that I get to be part of that, it just feels great."



Chase Amarosa ('21)

Chase is Mouth of the River's Photo Editor who spends his time skiing, surfing, taking photos, and playing the viola. He is excited to be on staff. "I thought it was so cool how [MOR is] student run and it was a like minded group of people working together, and I just kinda wanted to be a part of that. I wanted to contribute to photography and writing, and I thought it would be really cool to do it." Chase thinks the magazine is important for the student body, he said that, "sometimes we need a voice to articulate ideas or have someone to inform [the community] of what's happening, or just to keep the community tight."



Carissa Miller ('21)

Carissa is this year's Business Manager. She said she wanted to join MOR because, "I think it's a really fun opportunity to really be a part of the school. I feel like MOR is something that really benefits our community. It gives a way for students to have an outlet to write about what they are passionate about." She enjoys playing on the basketball and softball teams for ORHS. Carissa is thinking of going to college for either business management, journalism, or communications and broadcasting.



Zachary Jones ('21)

Zak is the Sports and Culture Editor for MOR. He wanted to join staff because, "I thought it would be a great experience to get to meet new people, and I wanted to have a voice in what the community says." Zak enjoys being with his friends and running for the school's track and cross country teams along with being a part of Math Team. He's not sure what he'll do after high school, but he thinks that it will probably be something math related.



Holly Reid ('21)

The Op-Ed Editor this year is Holly. She is on student senate, part of Best Buddies and NHS, and she also enjoys club team rowing, hanging out with friends, ski racing, and other outdoor activities. Holly said that, "[MOR] is a way to connect to students and parents, or teachers, and pretty much everyone and get educated on news going on in the school, or just in the community or topics that people might not have been aware of before." She wanted to join MOR because, "I really just loved the journalistic style of writing and I thought it would be super fun and a really unique class to take and just get to learn more about the community and improve as a writer."



Luca Haines ('21)

Luca is the Features Editor this year. He joined MOR because he "really enjoyed journalism. I think it's a really useful tool, to work on skills in terms of talking to people, reaching out to people, and then writing itself. But I think it's just super fun and it's also vital to any community." In his free time, Luca is involved in all things bike racing, "I'm trying to figure out if I will go to college right away or try to race bikes professionally." Luca has lived in several places including Budapest, Hungary for six months, and San Carlos, Argentina for three weeks, both in the last two years, and he lived in Texas until fourth grade.



Melanie Banafato ('21)

The Multimedia Manager for Mouth of the River this year is Melanie. She enjoys skiing, swimming, and hanging out with friends. She is on the ORHS swim and track teams along with being a student senate member. Melanie wanted to join MOR because, "I just wanted to try it out, see what it's like. I've also heard good things from people who have done it before saying that it was really fun." She said that another factor was her love for writing, especially in the journalistic style.



Riley Brown ('21)

An aspiring journalist, Riley, dreams of someday writing for the New York Times. He is the magazine's Website Manager this year. He said, "our job at MOR is to tell students, even adults, in the school and community about what's happening and we have the right to talk about big issues that are actually affecting us." Riley also hopes to travel. He said, "I've always wanted to see different cultures around the world and see how different people live compared to us."



Sadie Hackenburg ('21)

Sadie is the Layout Editor and is interested in both philosophy and writing. She enjoyed the freedom and responsibility of journalism in Journalism 1. Sadie joined MOR because, "it's a good way for the students to get out issues that they think are important and have more people read about them and form their own opinions to get things done." Sadie is a part of the high school's soccer team, Unified basketball, and spring track, Red Cross club, Photography club, and student government, where she is secretary.



Alden Swiesz ('21)

Alden is the Schedule Manager for MOR. He wanted to join because, "the fact that [Journalism 1] was more than just writing essays and reading and all that just made me realize how much I like the subject, and so I felt that I would have a really fun time doing MOR." Alden plays on varsity teams for OHRS with hockey, baseball, and soccer. Alden said he sees himself having a sports related career in the future, either sports journalism, or sports management.



Ellis Tonkin ('21)

Ellis is the Social Media Manager. In his free time, he enjoys fishing, biking, playing baseball, and generally anything outdoors. He has been on the high school's varsity baseball team since freshman year. He wants to play baseball in college and is thinking of going into business or sports management. He wanted to join MOR because, "I think it's a really interesting way to spread your voice to the community and school. I don't think there are a lot of opportunities to do that in everyday classes, so I think MOR is a really unique opportunity we have in school."



Sean Moriarty ('20)

For Marketing Director, Sean, Mouth of the River was always something he wanted to be a part of. "The first time I saw it as a freshman, I thought, 'this seems really cool.' It's just something I always wanted to do. I like writing and I think sports journalism's probably what I'm going to minor in college." He is thinking of going to business school, hopefully in Boston, MA, and enjoys hockey, video games, and graphic design. He plays for the school's hockey team, although he joked, "I'm not good at it, but I play it."



Emily Hamilton ('21)

Emily is the magazine's Content Manager. She said she found a love for writing last year in Journalism 1 that she had never had before. Emily said she enjoys being on staff. "I think it's really cool to be the first people in the school to hear about these issues and communicate that to people." She plays the saxophone in the school band and also enjoys cooking, baking, going to the beach, and spending time with friends. Her current plan is to go to medical school and choose a career in the medical field.



Isabella Crocco ('21)

Bella is the Print and Circulation Manager this year. She said that, "[MOR] is a great way for other students to get to know people in the high school and the community and what's going on, and I hope it becomes more of a mainstream thing, school wide." Bella is also a part of the sustainability club and plans on incorporating sustainable solutions into her writing. Looking to the future, Bella said that she wants to be a singer or songwriter, but she also said that, "I would love to become fluent in Spanish, and then teach English in Spain."

Mouth of the River Mission Statement

Mouth of the River seeks to reliably inform the student body, as well as the surrounding community, of interesting and newsworthy content in a modern, compelling format. Our goal as a staff is to give voice to the students of Oyster River, and have it heard by all our students. The opinions expressed in Mouth of the River represent those of the writers and staff.

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SCHOOLGY

Google Classroom, teacher websites, Facebook, TeamSnap, Moodle, and email are just a few of the platforms teachers, teams, and clubs have been using to communicate in the Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD). Starting in the 2019-20 school year, the district began using Schoology, a program designed for schools so that all your class, team, and club information is in one place.

Before this year, Oyster River didn't have a standard Learning Management System (LMS). Teachers were allowed to choose any virtual platform to communicate with students and parents, causing confusion over where to find communications from the school. By switching to Schoology, all school related information, including classes, clubs, sports, and activities, should be in one place. The district plans to have completely transitioned to Schoology by the end of the 2019-20 school year. Schoology costs the district \$11,500 per year, this covers all students and teachers in the district. At this point in the year, in October, the teachers are ahead of where Information Technol-

ogy (IT) and the Technology Integrators had projected they'd be in the transition. These teachers are ready to open Schoology to parents, a conversation projected to start around the end of the quarter one on November first. However, many teachers aren't comfortable users yet and students generally have mixed feelings about the platform.

not agreed to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law protecting student education records, or HB1612. Celeste Best is the technology integrator at the high school and was chosen to chair a committee created to find an LMS. Best said, "our school's lawyers, which obviously I'm not involved in that conversation, are very nervous about us using Google." According to Best, students will continue to use Google Drive, at least for the foreseeable future. Best explained that while Google didn't agree to the privacy laws, Google Classroom was the biggest issue due to the nature of information available on Google Classroom.

Another incentive for an LMS was the ability to create a district wide standard for communication. Previously, many elementary teachers had their own websites and emailed home a weekly parent newsletter, and at the middle and high schools, teachers may have used any one of many platforms, or chosen not to use one at all. Noting that this is a transition year, Best said, "the goal is everybody can go to Schoology and they will

"The goal is everybody can go to Schoology and they will find their child's information"

ogy (IT) and the Technology Integrators had projected they'd be in the transition. These teachers are ready to open Schoology to parents, a conversation projected to start around the end of the quarter one on November first. However, many teachers aren't comfortable users yet and students generally have mixed feelings about the platform.

The assistant superintendent for the district, Todd Allen, talked about why the district adopted Schoology. "We're one to one at the middle and high school and we needed a platform to manage all the content that kids were going to be exposed to and teachers were going to create." One to one means that every student receives a laptop at the beginning of the year and keeps it throughout the year. The middle school went one to one for the 2018-19 school year, and this year's freshman class is one to one for the 2019-20 school year. The rest of ORHS plans to go one to one next year. To learn more about one to one, see Melanie Banafato's article about one to one at mor.news.

In the past, high school teachers often used Google Classroom to manage any content they created. However, New Hampshire recently passed HB1612, a law outlining new standards for student and teacher privacy. According to Best, Google has

find their child's information regardless of where they are."

The transition has not been without its challenges. Allen said, "the biggest issue we're struggling with has been the compatibility of Schoology and PowerSchool." Because PowerSchool is the ORCSD Student Information System [SIS], all the student information is in PowerSchool. The district has had difficulty getting PowerSchool and Schoology to sync, even though Schoology has said it's possible. Because of the difficulty making the two programs sync, Schoology was not available for the first week of school.

At the time of reporting this article, in mid-October, many teachers still aren't using Schoology as their primary platform for communication. Tom Hausmann, a Spanish teacher at ORHS, said he mostly uses Schoology for organization and providing links for students, much like he used Google Classroom. He said of his future plans for the LMS, "I don't think I'll use it for scheduling. I might use it to turn in assignments, but we'll see."

While Hausmann recognized that for some teachers moving all their content from Google Classroom to Schoology might be frustrating, this wasn't the case for him. "There are some people that their whole life is on Google Classroom and that's not me.



I just needed a tool that's easy for me to stash links and effectively organize topics in different areas," Hausmann said. Clare Donaldson ('20) said that the only class she consistently

uses Schoology for is Forensics, which she takes with Best. She said, "a lot of my other teachers don't like it. Maybe a couple other classes use it for class links, but it's really only one class that I use it for."

Donaldson preferred Google Classroom to Schoology "because [Schoology is] not linked to Google Docs and all those

pretty wide range of what the needs are." Allen said professional development is key in helping teachers feel more comfortable with Schoology. Best and the other technology integrators held a tech boot camp over the summer for teachers for this reason. However, as the boot camp was over the summer, it was not mandatory, and not all teachers attended.

Susan Leifer, the Technology Integrator at Mast Way Elementary School, was surprised by the number of teachers who were using it. She said, "when we presented it, I guess it filled a void that they really wanted and we had all these teachers on board and ready to go. We never in a million years expected that we would have teachers where they are already by October; we thought that would take us well into March."

Because they didn't expect teachers to be comfortable users at this point in the year, Allen said the initial plan was to give teachers a year to build content and learn the program before opening the parent portal. But, they quickly found at the middle and elementary schools that communication with parents was a primary concern for teachers. Allen explained that the focus at the moment was on helping teachers learn the platform before introducing the ParentPortal to prevent frustration. He said, "I

"Think of [Schoology] like the Walmart. Instead of going to a grocery store, and a hardware store, and a clothing store, and a shoe store, you go to Walmart and you can get all of that."

things, which we use regularly [...] Google Classroom has always been a lot easier because you can just link things directly." While it is possible to upload Google documents to Schoology, you have to first download it, which you never had to do with Google Classroom, because the two programs work together. Julia Kinsey ('23) said, "it's pretty confusing at first. Not every teacher uses it, so while you can use it for some classes, some teachers don't like it. A few of them went over it in a very basic way so we're submitting assignments and stuff like that, but a lot of people don't understand it. I don't understand it." Kinsey has found it difficult to find various elements her teachers have been telling her were on Schoology, including the assignment schedule and grades for specific assignments.

From talking with other students, Kinsey found, "a lot of kids said that it's really confusing; they don't understand it. But, there were a few who said they did understand it and that they vastly preferred it to Google Classroom."

While Allen recognized that not every teacher is using Schoology to its full extent, he said, "professional staff, particularly here at the high school, seem to be embracing it very quickly. In fact, I think Ms. Best told me roughly half the teachers are really comfortable users. They've created their own classroom sites and all that, but half are not."

Allen also explained that all staff members are starting from different levels of understanding of technology. "When you're doing professional development around technology you have to have it be personal. You have to identify what they need and provide it to them. And what we're finding is that we have a

wouldn't say that there's absolutely no way that we'll open it, we just don't have a plan to do that right away."

Best said the district is moving towards getting the parent portal up on Schoology ahead of the original target, "but we're not there cause not all the teachers are using [Schoology]. We have a tentative timeline of that conversation starting at the end of the quarter." Quarter one ended November 1st.

Best explained how parent involvement in Schoology at the high school might look. "They're not gonna see the gradebook. They'd be able to open the assignment in terms of the document the teacher provides like, 'here's the instructions,' they wouldn't necessarily have access to your work as a student."

Best also explained that the functionality of Schoology and the parent portal would look completely different at the elementary, middle,



and high schools. Leifer explained that the first role Schoology plays is providing students links to various online resources. She explained that many of the kids are too young to be able to type in URLs, so Schoology will appear as an automatic tab when they log in and allow them to click on buttons that will take them directly to any online resource they'd need.

Leifer explained that the other big piece of Schoology at the elementary schools will be the Parent Portal. "It's very important for our parents to get pictures, to get updates: 'it's a field trip, wear your sneakers tomorrow cause it's gym.' Because we're dealing with itty-bitties," said Leifer. Currently, parents are able to log into their student's account, but they don't have their own login.

Schoology and Leifer, through her new role as the Technol-

ORHS ever adopting a competency grading system, but he does predict that teachers will use this function to give students an understanding of where they stand with course competencies.

Allen also said that by building content on Schoology, it would be possible for teachers at the high school to develop their own online courses. Currently, students interested in taking classes that don't fit with their schedules, or that are not offered, can do so through the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS). However, VLACS is not a perfect system. "One of the things that's been an ongoing frustration by the educators here at Oyster River, is that VLACS courses, although many of them are wonderful, we don't feel they have the same level of rigor, generally speaking, that the in-house courses have," said Allen. If a student were to leave the ORHS curriculum sequence

"When we presented it, I guess it filled a void that they really wanted and we had all these teachers on board and ready to go. We never in a million years expected that we would have teachers where they are already by October."

ogy Integrator, can also help Mast Way to achieve the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. Leifer explained some of the ISTE standards, for example, kindergartners "have to be able to log on and log off, they have to know how to get on the internet; digital citizenship is a piece [of ISTE], a little coding." She said ISTE is "just like any curriculum; it's the scaffolding you need to go on and be successful in middle school and high school." One of the ISTE requirements is a digital portfolio. The portfolio would include all the digital work a student completed from kindergarten to twelfth grade that they were proud of, or that showed growth. Leifer explained that this has been difficult to achieve without the perfect platform, but she hopes that in three to four years, Schoology will be able to fill that void.

Before this year, the elementary schools didn't have any kind of LMS like Google Classroom, which made it difficult to give students access to resources, and more difficult for teachers to find them again year to year. Leifer explained that Schoology filled a void for teachers. She said, "think of it like the Walmart. Instead of going to a grocery store, and a hardware store, and a clothing store, and a shoe store, you go to Walmart and you can get all of that."

The hope is that teachers and students will learn to use Schoology to its full capabilities so that it can grow far beyond what it's currently used for. Allen explained that while competency grading was frustrating in PowerSchool, it's better in the Schoology Gradebook, which teachers aren't currently using. "The gradebook in Schoology is much more user friendly than the one in PowerSchool; it's much more graphic. Instead of just saying 'your kid met a competency,' it gives you an idea of how much of the competency they met. It's color coded so you can see visually where they're at." Allen said he does not envision

to take a course on VLACS, it would be difficult for them to return to the curriculum sequence. Through Schoology, students could take a very similar style course, but it would be monitored by a teacher in the building, managed in-house, and housed on Schoology.

Allen said he sees Schoology becoming the principal method of communication between families and the school. "Right now we get a lot of community feedback that they're frustrated with how they get information from the school. For example, they go to the website, if it's not on the main page of the website, they have to click seventeen times to get to the thing that they need, and they feel frustrated that it's hard to get that information." Allen said that Schoology could fix this problem. "What Schoology allows us to do is to personalize how each individual person gets information from the school." Everyone would be able to indicate which sports, activities, or topics they want to hear updates from. This could eliminate the district-wide email blasts that give information that isn't always relevant to the whole district.

The implementation of Schoology is an ongoing process that requires professional staff and students to learn as they go. Allen said, "there's a lot of things it's going to do, it's just going to take us time to get there. I think it's going to take us two to three years before we're really fully able to understand all the things it can do for us." **M**

- Susanna Serrano

Artwork by Jane Schwadron and Charlotte Hambucken

Vi·sion

/ 'viZHən /



1. the ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom.

Every June, a couple hundred Oyster River High School students dressed in blue and white robes hear their names called as they walk across the stage to receive their diplomas. As they depart from the district, each student leaves with valuable content-based knowledge that was gained in the classrooms many have grown up in. But what about outside of the classroom? How has the district helped graduates master not only transferable academic skills, but invaluable social and emotional skills as well?

Over the past three years, the Oyster River Cooperative School District has looked at what they want their graduates to have accomplished over their time at Oyster River. This process has led them to create “Vision of a Graduate,” a working document created by staff and administrators from around the district.

According to the current draft of this document, students who receive their diploma should be, “capable and empowered individuals who demonstrate a critical awareness of self and an empathetic awareness of others.” The district plans to use this “vision” as a way to help guide students throughout their education. Additionally, it can be used as a consulting tool when making decisions regarding curriculum or programming.

High school is a pivotal time for everyone. It is when many fine tune their academic skills in order to prepare themselves for the next step in life. At most schools, students, teachers, and guardians are often focused on grades and gaining content based knowledge. Vision of a Graduate works to round out a student’s experience by emphasizing the social emotional skills that are crucial in having a successful future.

“We have our mission statement, and that grounds a lot of what we do. But you also have to have a vision [...] A vision is more of what you aspire to, the very large picture of

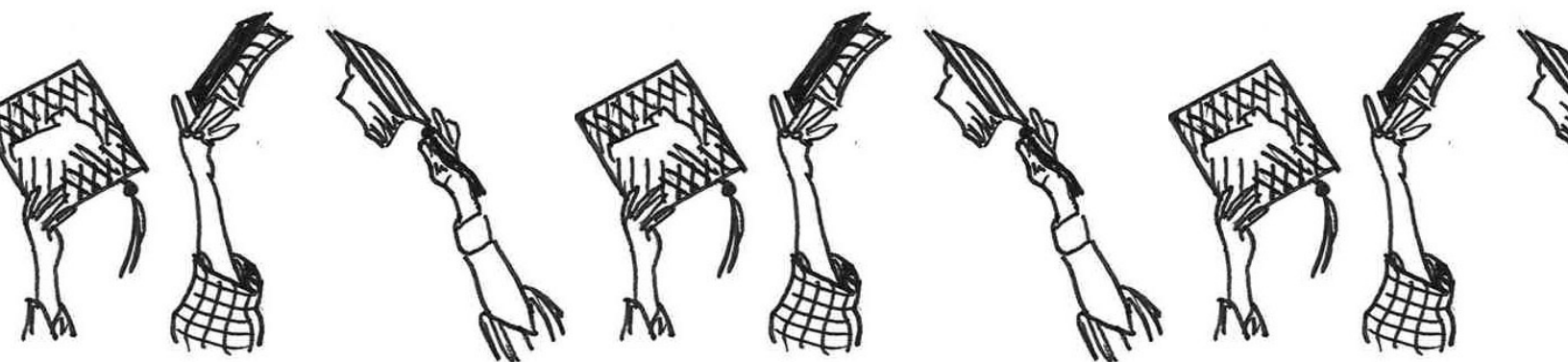
things,” said Suzanne Filippone, Oyster River High School (ORHS) Principal, who sees first hand how critical these four years are for students.

“In teaching, we talk about something called planning with the end in mind. If I am designing a unit in my classroom, I want to understand all the little things I need [students] to do before you are able to do the bigger things. But if we think about a bigger institution, like a school, if we don't have a vision of what we want to occur as an end outcome, what's the point of doing all these other little things?” said Marjke Yatsevitch, an English teacher at ORHS.

Being aware of these smaller pieces helps to improve the average school day of most students. Morgan Chapman ('20) believes that Vision of a Graduate can help create a stronger culture around school. “There’s a lot of stigma and stereotypes surrounding different types of learners, whether it regards grades, GPA, or class rigor. At Oyster River, there’s a lot of pressure to strive for a certain number. This [vision] seems like it recognizes that a student is more than the grade they receive,” she said.

Katie Johnson, an ORHS math teacher, has played a role in helping to fine tune the Vision of a Graduate and what the school is looking for in its graduates. “Every educator has certain outcomes they want their students to achieve. We all have these feelings. We want students to be self-advocates, self-directed learners, we want them to persevere, we want them to be kind, and to have a growth mindset,” Johnson said.

This project has gone through many stages. Last year, the ORHS faculty spent nearly half of a teacher workshop day discussing the topic. During this day, staff worked within the building to identify what is most important for students to learn outside of content based knowledge. Filippone stressed that although many of these conversations have



stemmed from the high school, it is a topic that spans across all grades in the district. "It's important to have sixth grade teachers talking about what they want to see as well," Filippone said.

Laurenne Ramsdell, a sixth grade teacher at Oyster River Middle School, talked about how the "vision" will be followed out at the middle school level. "One of our main focus as educators is to make sure that what we are teaching students is transferable to everyday life in some capacity [...] No matter what school or grade level or even team/department we teach in, we are a team of educators at Oyster River, and by having a common Vision of a Graduate across the board, we can work more effectively toward that goal," she said.

plished these skills."

Johnson agreed with Filippone's beliefs, that a project like a capstone would be beneficial, but also feels that these skills could be assessed within rubrics of assignments. She added, "we can have a rubric that incorporates 'how is your communication or have you self-advocated about this?' We can put something concrete to our conversations, tests, and projects that reflect how we are interpreting how students are doing and for students to self-reflect."

Filippone said that the document is in its final steps of creation. "From here we want to work on the wording and getting it to a point where we can start having conversations with [students] and the community about it," said Filippone.

Students have noted that this overall Vision of a Gradu-

"We are a team of educators at Oyster River, and by having a common vision of a graduate across the board, we can work more effectively toward that goal."

Along with faculty meetings and committees working on this project in house, several faculty and administrators attended a 2Revolutions conference this past summer, in part to fine tune and sum up the ideas behind Vision of a Graduate. 2Revolutions is an educational design lab company that works with school districts to rethink and improve the education system.

Both Yatsevitch and Johnson attended this conference and felt that the district was able to take away several positives from the conference. Yatsevitch said that creating this Vision of a Graduate is, "a way for a traditional educational setting to talk about the whole person and then ask the questions - how does that change what we do day to day."

Often in school, students compare themselves based on test scores and GPAs. Yatsevitch talked about assessing success based on other factors, saying, "we also should consider ourselves successful with a really robust balance of intellect, social skills, compassion and empathy."

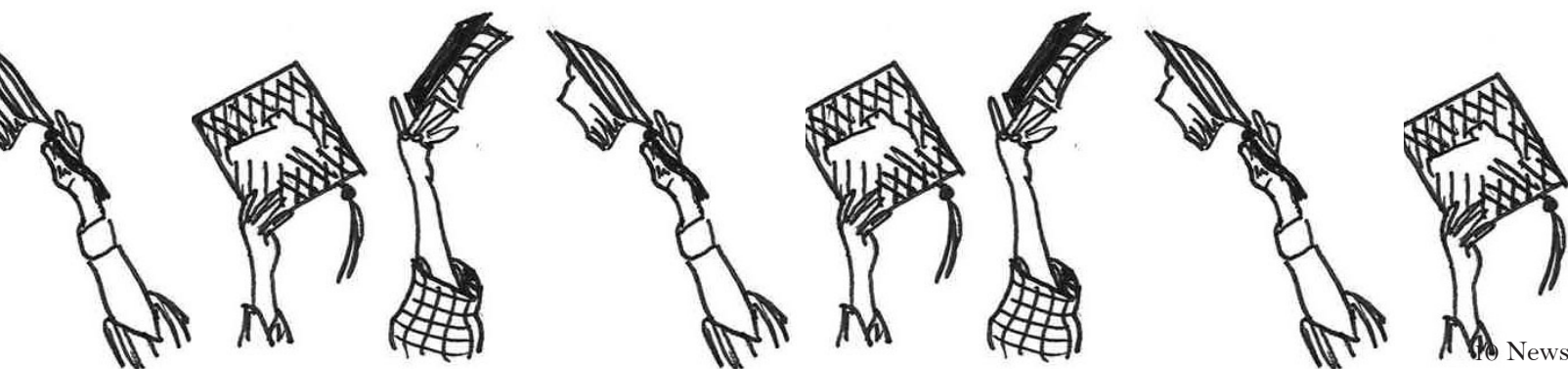
Because it is difficult to assess the extent to which a student has accomplished this "vision". Filippone feels that a project similar to a capstone or senior project would be, "an opportunity for kids to demonstrate that they have accom-

ate could be very beneficial for the district and that it could have had a great impact on their journeys. "There's a lot of pressure among students to reach this unreasonable goal of academic perfection. I feel like if this was implemented long before I became a freshman, it wouldn't make things perfect, but it would at least give our school culture and community a chance to recognize the importance of overall understanding of curriculum, not just memorization. This idea, paired with the importance of how you act and treat others, could've created a very different environment for Oyster River," said Chapman.

Filippone closed by saying that this Vision of a Graduate is something that will greatly benefit the district and the students who graduate from it. "[Vision of a Graduate] is something that grounds us and the work that we do and I think we need to be grounded. There's a lot of initiatives. There is always internal and external pressures on schools and on kids. We need to constantly ask ourselves is this good for kids and does this follow what we believe in as a school and as a district." **M**

- Joe Morrell

Artwork by Chloe Jackson



A NEW DOOR OPENS AT EMERY FARM

“Our focus with the new market and cafe is selling all local food and products, first what we produce here on the farm, then going to other local farm producers and finally, sourcing everything else from the New England area,” said Holly Phillbrick, business partner of the all new Emery Farm market and cafe.

After months of construction, Emery Farm has built an all new market and cafe which is taking the spot of the old building. The market and cafe hope to serve as a healthy grocer for the Durham community, selling farm fresh foods as well as locally sourced produce from the New England area. The market had a soft opening in October and plan to open when construction is finished. The market and cafe hopes to determine the opening date in November.

With the new market and cafe, Emery Farm hopes to become a staple in the Durham community as a small grocer for healthy, farm grown options. “With the new construction, we are really hoping and trying to make Emery Farm a platform to be the local hub of the community, by offering a lot of really great food offerings that are farm to table as well as a space where people can come and hangout,” said Phillbrick.

This idea of becoming more involved in the community’s health has come with many new advancements to the market and cafe, one being the installation of a commercial kitchen. “Having a commercial kitchen allows us to make our own fabulous food right in house creating a bigger market so that we can be more of a small, local and natural foods grocer,” said Phillbrick. The commercial kitchen sets the market and cafe apart from your traditional grocery store, while emphasizing this idea of farm fresh foods.

Christian Towle, employee and son of Brown Towle, the head farmer for Emery Farm, grew up around the farm and has

seen how it has grown over his years. Agreeing with Phillbrick, Towle adds, “more people need to be watching what they are eating. I think the best thing is farm fresh food and we are one of the only places that are able to provide that to the Durham

community [...] the new market and cafe will get more products out and help expand the farm overall [...] I have seen such a great family environment here and with the expansion I think it only adds to that environment.”

Sadie Mckenna (’21) has also grown up on the property and seen the farm’s growth over the years. Her favorite part was its family friendly environment and community activities. “I grew up there and it was my favorite place ever, I loved how it was all old and antique [...] Even with the more modernized building they kept some of the old, antique features of the old building which is nice to see,” said Mckenna.

Although the new building is three times the size of the old building, Emery Farm did not want to lose their family friendly environment and community activities. In fact, the new building has space

built in for the community. “We have more space upstairs which we are calling a yoga studio where we might hold classes [...] We might also hold more community activities like cooking classes and seminars during the week and over the winter to get people in at other times of the year,” said Phillbrick.

Even though there is a new market and cafe, Emery Farm



plans to continue to host family friendly activities, including apple picking, pumpkin decorating and their haunted corn maze. Phillbrick said, “these activities are what Emery Farm is all about [...] they bring the family together and that’s something we wouldn’t want to lose.”

Along with more community space, Emery Farm has added new features to the market and cafe that will benefit customers some as simple as public bathrooms.

Unlike before, customers will not have to use the porta-pot-

Emery Farm has the potential to become a place that has more of everyday offerings, whether that’s picking up your dinner or stopping in the morning to grab your coffee and bagel [...] it will have a little bit more of everything.” With the addition of heating, air conditioning, and public bathrooms, the market and cafe has turned into a fully functioning building, something the old building struggled with.

Seeing that the new market will now have much more to maintain as Emery Farm has expanded their business, there are

“With the new construction, we are really hoping and trying to make Emery Farm a platform to be the local hub of the community”

ty to go to the bathroom as the new building has made it a priority to install public bathrooms inside the market. More important however, the market and cafe has installed heating and air conditioning as another advancement. “We were really a seasonal building before, but now with the installation of heating in the new building, we can be open year round which ultimately makes it a more sustainable business for everyone,” Phillbrick explained.

In the past, due to the conditions of the old building, Emery Farm could only maintain a seasonal business in the months of spring into summer and the beginning of fall. Being open year round is crucial for the growth of Emery Farm and its new market and cafe. Phillbrick said, “with the new building

more jobs to go around. “Now that we will be open year round we will be adding full time and part-time jobs [...] The ‘farmer brand’ part of our business will also be adding jobs so we can grow more products,” Phillbrick explained.

The new market and cafe hopes to become a local, more healthy and efficient way to grocer. Likewise, the addition of the market and cafe has created new jobs for the community while sending a message that eating healthy and living a healthy lifestyle is right in the heart of the community at anytime. “We really hope our market will bring more local food right to the community[...] We want to become more connected to the community by providing healthy, authentic options,” said Philbrick. **M**



- Carissa Miller

Safety —Over— Convenience

"I feel like I'm in a fishbowl because of the windows all around me. It's pretty drastic, but I understand why it's necessary these days, sadly," said Lisa Richardson, Attendance Secretary stationed in the remodeled area.

Oyster River High School (ORHS) has updated the front office after the New Hampshire Department of Homeland Security (NH-DHS) suggested it while auditing schools across the state. NH-DHS also supplied the school with a federal grant in order to do so. NH-DHS provided a list of other changes to be made, some already present, others being considered. Students coming back to school for the 2019-20 school year were greeted with this remodeled entrance, along with other improved safety measures like a new School Resource Officer (SRO).

The front office remodel was on top of the list of recommendations for improved safety. Michael McCann, Dean of Students for ORHS, said, "the way the office had been set up prior to this had become problematic with the amount of traffic coming into the office. It became more and more difficult to really monitor people coming and going, whether it's students or visitors. This is helping to reduce the flow of traffic and being able to check with people by having different checkpoints on the way in and having a visual of who's at the door."

The first of the checkpoints McCann mentioned is outside. The school has a camera outside the main doors that the office staff can see through and unlock after someone rings it. This checkpoint was not part of the new additions to the front office, but is still in use this year.

Once someone comes through, they are met with another set of doors and a window to the front office made of bulletproof glass with an intercom next to it. On the other side of the glass, the front office staff unlocks the second door to let the visitor in.

The second door after the entrance way leads to the front office. There is a second entrance way with two check-in kiosks for students and visitors. There is also a sliding window with another intercom, in the window, to the front office where Richardson works. The door that leads to the school can be locked from inside, by a key, if a threat is presented, but another door, that leads to the office area, is always locked.

Richardson, who sits in her new office area every day, said that, "I really didn't like the thought of being moved over into an office because I liked being out and talking to the kids and having interactions and being one on one. This way, I'm behind windows everywhere. I didn't like that. I still don't like it."

Students are also skeptical about the change to the front office. Josephine Chinburg ('21) said that she also didn't like the new layout and that it was hard to hear out of the intercom

in the first window. Chinburg was shocked when she came to school because she didn't know about the remodeling, and she went on to say that she thought it was "a little much."

The office wasn't the only change for school security. The new SRO is patrolling both the middle and high school in the Oyster River school district.

Officer Thomas Kilroy has an office located in a small hallway next to the nurse's office at the high school. He explained that although the Durham Police Department has had an SRO in the high school for the past 20 years, they're taking a new approach to the role this year. "This is the first year that an SRO is wearing a uniform every day," said Kilroy. He said that one of his major duties is providing a presence in the school. "Having a uniform and having a cruiser outside in front of the school is the first line of defense." The school is being cautious with what they include for security matters.

"We don't want [school] to be such a scary place," said McCann. "We don't want it to be a militaristic kind of place, but

we're trying to take as many precautions as possible. Anytime you implement any sort of safety measures, it does impact convenience, and so we try to balance that."

Kilroy wanted to make it clear that he was only here as a resource. "It's not just strictly police. My underlying role is security, but there's a lot more behind the role." He said, "we're here to be protective and make sure that we encourage young people that we're on their side and that we're here to help."

The school is still working on getting more safety and security precautions. They are planning on making the front office's outer windows bulletproof by applying a special film over it. There was also discussion of getting bollards, which are posts that are to deter traffic from riding on certain areas. They are considering placing them in at least the front of the school by the main doors. McCann also mentioned that the school has been monitoring the cameras and doors more closely.

The school is still enforcing safety drills including ALICE (alert, lockdown, inform, counter, and evacuate) by having teachers go over the meanings behind it and why the drills are important to learn, along with students participating in drills. Kilroy explained what teachers could do in these situations. "[Teachers] could maybe ask the class, 'what would you do?' to get an idea of what people feel comfortable doing." He also mentioned that it's better to plan ahead for these sorts of situations.

Everyone agreed that the most important thing that students and faculty can do ensure school-wide security is by following the "see something, say something" rule.

- Arianna Antonelli



Far From Home



Last June, Alice Pistritto ('20) was living in Sicily, Italy learning in the same classroom all day. Santiago Prada Ruiz ('21), from Madrid, Spain, attended a school smaller than Oyster River High School (ORHS), with double the students. This year, they are both going to ORHS, having the opportunity to experience a whole new culture first hand.

For the 2019-2020 school year, ORHS welcomed two exchange students, Pistritto and Prada Ruiz, from Italy and Spain, who will be at ORHS for the whole school year. While this is a once in a lifetime opportunity for many, it also comes with the challenges of adjusting to a new school, a new country, and an entirely new culture.

"Living in a new country with a random family is pretty different," said ORHS school counselor, Heather Machanoff, "but most of them know that that's going to be the case. The agencies do a pretty good job of educating the students and families of what that's going to be like."

When given the opportunity, many exchange students choose to go to another country to improve their language skills. Pistritto, an exchange student from Italy, was no exception. "I hope I learn the language really well," she explained. "It's really been my dream since I was really little."

However, learning English or any new language is no easy feat, especially when immersed in it within the high school environment. Prada Ruiz agreed saying, "The language is really hard and I'm still getting used to it."

Kara Sullivan, ORHS English teacher, explained that as an English teacher, she has a unique position with helping exchange students adjust to Oyster River and the English language in general. "I've spent a lot of time working with writing, especially on how to find better words for what's trying to be said, or how to stop overusing the same phrases," Sullivan said.

Aside from the language, Pistritto noticed many cultural differences within the school. "The first week was difficult because the school is really big for me and really different. For example, in Italy we have to stay in the same class [all day]," she explained.

Prada Ruiz mentioned the stress of finding his way around a school like ORHS. "It was very hard the first day because I got lost going to every class." He also explained the differences he'd noticed within the high school and its students. "The high school [in Spain], for example, we don't have lockers and the food is very different, the people are different. How people treat each other is different, how people dress," he said.

Pistritto noted that ORHS gives students more options for classes. "In Italy we have to do the same subjects for all five years of high school so we can't decide what we want to do. For example, I studied Latin, [and] I hate Latin. So here I had the possibility to choose what I really like, for example psychology," she said. While making friends at a new school may seem like a daunting

task, Pistritto explained, "everybody is really friendly, so it's not really difficult to make friends because everyone is really kind to me." She also added that many exchange students open up more with others during their time abroad. "A lot of exchange students have trouble making friends but during this experience they learn how to do it," she said.

Anna Sargent ('21), a member of a host family in the district explained her own perspective on different cultures. "It's been really interesting because you get to learn about the differences between your culture and someone else's. Almost every day they point out how something here is different from something there. I've gotten to see pictures of where they live and how they don't drive cars and even if they wanted to they couldn't get their license until they were eighteen, which is way different from here."

While being immersed in a new language and culture is a challenge of its own, Sargent explains that American high school social groups may be even more of a challenge for incoming students. "The most difficult thing is making friends because everybody by junior year already has their cliques, so it's hard for them to figure out who to hang out with, especially when they're all new and don't understand American norms yet," said Sargent.

While this may be the case at first, many exchange students will make those connections sooner rather than later. Machanoff explains, "to go to another country and live for a year, your personality typically will be one of maybe a little more outgoing or open to new experiences, so I think [exchange students] make friends pretty easily because of that."

Aside from the challenges faced by the exchange students themselves, the transition the school has to go through can also be difficult when what's required by ORHS and the school at home doesn't coincide. "The education systems are very different. Sometimes what the student perceives they need or that the school is saying they need back home doesn't mesh, so those are some challenges that we have to work through," explained Machanoff.

While the current system allows for two exchange students to come to Oyster River each year, Sargent expressed her frustration with this, suggesting, "more people should have exchange students at Oyster River High School because the ones that we do have definitely feel very singled out."

Prada Ruiz concluded with his thoughts on the importance of cultural exchange experiences. "It opens the mind, that is the most important reason. You get to know new people which are very different from the ones you know from home. I feel grateful for being here, not everyone in Spain has this opportunity." **M**

- Emily Hamilton
Artwork by Hannah Jeong

“I’ll do it later.”

It was Sunday night, and Abby* had just started an assignment that was given to her three weeks in advance. The assignment was a four page paper for philosophy answering the question “what does it mean to think well?” Along with this assignment, she also had a four page paper due Monday for Debate and Persuasion that she hadn’t started. Abby was feeling stressed due to the pressure of getting these difficult assignments done in one day. She had many work days in class, but achieved little. As a result of this procrastination, when Abby ran into things she wasn’t sure how to phrase or approach, she didn’t have time to come back to it or crowdsource it. Abby just had to go with what she had written, and get words down on paper, regardless of what they were. Leaving not one, but two, assignments until the last day when she had no choice but to get them done, after having weeks to complete them, left her with less potential, and time, to produce quality work.

Whether we want to admit it or not, all students have tendencies to procrastinate in one way or another. For some, it may come in the form of watching just one more episode of a Netflix series before starting a paper. For others, procrastination may be putting off studying for a big test until the night before and hoping all the necessary work gets done. While it’s an issue for some more than others, procrastination is something most high schoolers deal with. Procrastination is conscious choice by some students, but for others, it’s just a bad habit that they can’t seem to get rid of. The causes could be anything: stress, sports, lack of time, or just not having inner motivation to get work started. In recent years, there seems to have been an increase in levels of procrastination, and the consequences of procrastination are becoming more evident. It’s important that students realize the effects it can have on them, and how they can stop this habit before it’s too late.

As time goes on, grade levels go up, and workload increases procrastination seems to be much more common among students. Between extracurricular activities, sports, SATs, and planning for a future beyond high school it’s easy for high school students to become overwhelmed. As a result of these stressors piling up, procrastination occurs because in times of stress it’s easier to say “I can do it later.” However, this really just makes it harder and more stressful weeks, days, or hours, later. Why has this issue become so prevalent in academic settings?

In recent years, a big factor that contributes to a lot of students’ procrastination and lack of efficiency with schoolwork is technology. According to “Phone Notifications Are as Distract-

ing as Phone Calls” by The Atlantic, a study was performed by three researchers at Florida State University. One of the study’s authors said that “our results suggest that mobile phones can disrupt attention performance even if one does not interact with the device.” Another finding within the study was that if people feel like there is a notification that hasn’t been checked yet, that creates discomfort, and even if people know they shouldn’t check it, they do.

“When you sit down to work and you have your phone on you, you’re constantly getting notifications. It really draws your attention to that, and just replying to one thing can lead to another,” said Michael Szymanski (‘21).

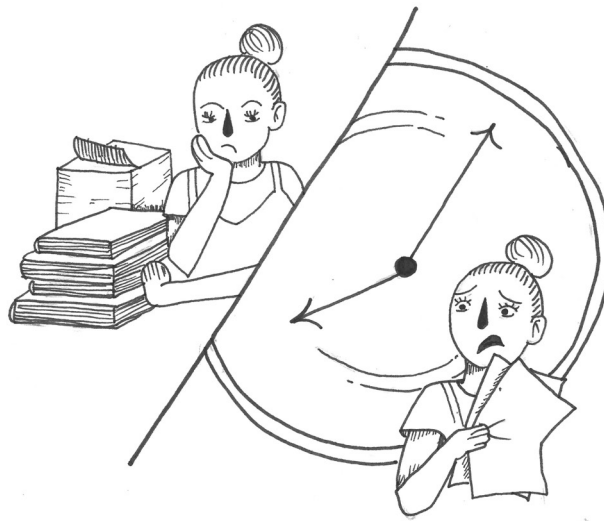
Although teachers can take away students’ phones in class or set guidelines for phone usage in the classroom, it ultimately comes down to the student being able to discipline themselves. After high school, there won’t always be anyone, telling students to manage their time better and do their work. When students have yet to develop this skill in high school, it can create long term benefits for students.

Kim Cassamas, a School Counselor at ORHS, spoke to this. “It creates anxiety and stress, and those are just natural responses when the pressure gets on.”

Lulu Upham (‘22) agreed with this point and said, “I procrastinate due to stress, because sometimes when I get overwhelmed with so many different assignments that are due, I kind of just shut down.”

Although procrastination is something that isn’t a conscious decision for some, other students choose to procrastinate. Wolfe Ramsay (‘21) often finds himself saving school work for the last minute, specifically large assignments such as papers and projects. However, many students raise the point that procrastination helps them because it creates an element of pressure. Ramsay sees both sides to this point, saying, “I’m a lot more focused when I have to get it done, but of course, if I spend less time on it, it probably won’t come out as good.”

Most educators would argue that procrastination results in more negatives than positives. Matthew Pappas is a Social Studies teacher at ORHS who sees no benefit to procrastinating. He said, “gaining the skill of getting the work done early is very important. The sooner that someone learns that skill, the better. It’s something they’ll have the rest of their life. If given an opportunity to procrastinate, [students] will, and it’ll continue the rest of their lives.”



Jaclyn Jensen, Social Studies teacher at ORHS, agreed with Pappas and added, “The best work you can do comes from when you have engaged in a process of revision and review.”

In some instances, “procrastination is just a strategy to get [students] through. Sometimes you just have to think ‘what has to be done for tomorrow’ and start there,” Cassamas said. When procrastination becomes a method students use regularly to get by day by day, there is potential for it to hurt students in the long term, once all that work builds up.

“Units are pretty similar in length in the building. It creates a perfect storm where everyone has their tests, projects, and papers due in a short amount of time,” said Cassamas.

When this “perfect storm” occurs, a lot of students may look back on times where they procrastinated, wishing they’d taken advantage of that one free period, or free hour before practice. Charlotte Merritt (‘22) spoke to this point saying, “I do anything but the thing I have to do, even if it’s chores, instead of doing my homework.”

Since most students seem to put anything, even less enjoyable activities, above homework, what can ORHS do to help students learn this lifelong skill? While fixing the issue of procrastination has to be self-motivated and self-overcome, teachers at ORHS can help students along the way in some small ways. Implementing deadlines for long term projects can definitely be helpful. However, another area that teachers can help with is the amount of time given for an assignment. “I’ve noticed that there is a sweet spot

when it comes to the amount of time students have on an assignment. If you give them too much time, then

they think they have forever [...] If you give them not enough time, then they don’t have enough time to complete it to the best of their ability,” shared Jensen.

Jensen sees this as an issue because, “teenagers are still developing their executive functioning skills [...] your ability to reason and weigh out these things is just not that of an adult’s.” Jorgen Lorvig (‘21) has found a strategy to avoid procrastination by planning out his large assignments early on that could be very useful for other students too. “I know that if I don’t make time for it beforehand, I’m not going to do it, or I’ll end up procrastinating.”

It’s easy for someone not experiencing the daily ins and outs of high school to say, “why not just get it done?” In reality, this would be a wise thing to do. However, it’s not that easy for most. Sophie Sullivan (‘21) spoke to the fact that students need balance of extracurriculars, fun, and schoolwork. “I feel that after an 8 hour school day, you shouldn’t be expected to go home and hop back on your homework. You should have more time to do other things in your life. Typically, I’ll do things I’m passionate about after school, and then when I’m ready to do homework, it ends up being somewhere around 10 o’clock.”

Balance is necessary to living a healthy lifestyle, but things get tricky when seeking balance results in an overload of work. At the high school, Jensen and Pappas both mentioned having systems in place to help with procrastination. Although there’s

nothing that’s completely “procrastination proof,” Jensen talked about trying to help her students shake this habit. She said “I also give students time in class to work on major assignments [...] but something I’ve noticed is that not all students use that time as efficiently as they could. If I notice that, I try to talk to them about it.”

Systems placed within class to try to limit procrastination can definitely help, like deadlines and work days, but ultimately it comes down to the student. Managing time is a skill that doesn’t develop overnight, but it’s a skill that will benefit you for the rest of your life.

Becca Shay (‘19) is a freshman at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In high school, she struggled with procrastination because she didn’t feel motivated to do certain assignments: specifically ones she wasn’t interested or passionate about. Now, Shay is taking classes of greater interest to her, but also has a lot going on outside of the classroom. Shay is rowing at the Division 1 level in college, which occupies a lot of her time. Along with rowing, she’s also busy figuring out all that college has to offer, building new friendships, and getting used to her new schedule and campus. “I’m busy, so I have to prioritize things. My life isn’t just school, I have other fun things going on, and I need to do my work. I’m more motivated to get my work out of the way than when I was in high school.”

Because she has more to look forward to, she said she has more reason to get everything done. In order to make sure

she has time for more than just schoolwork, she’s found it helpful to plan out her time using a planner. This is a strategy that can be very effective for some.

“[Students] don’t write

[what they need to do] down and just have it all in their head.

When students get it written down, they break it down and get a plan in place, and all of a sudden you see the stress go away,” Cassamas said.

Another helpful strategy is doing work in pieces. Telling yourself to write a page, or study for 30 minutes, and rewarding yourself with a break after that is done can also be very beneficial for some. Even if teachers don’t create deadlines, you can set self-deadlines for yourself to stay ahead of the curve.

As great as technology can be, everyone knows it is a major distraction. Just placing your phone in another room while working on homework, or turning off notifications, could dramatically decrease time spent doing schoolwork.

For some, a change in habit may come after a sleepless night spent writing an essay saved for the last minute. For others, it could come after their time in high school, when they realize the effects the habit will have on them in the real world. Regardless of how you achieve this, procrastination is a habit that can be broken with practice, and preparation. It’s something we all struggle with, but it doesn’t have to stay with you forever. **M**

*Name changed for anonymity

Holly Reid
Artwork by Iris Yu

“I do anything but the thing I have to do,
even if it’s chores, instead of doing my
homework.”

Get Woke

How to get involved in politics before you're old enough to vote.

Have you ever been frustrated by your inability to vote? Wanted to find another way to influence our government? Or wondered if you could do more to support your favorite candidate? The good news is you don't have to be eighteen to have a say in politics, and your say in our democracy doesn't have to end after you cast your vote.

As we come closer to the New Hampshire primary elections on February 11th 2020, and gear up for the presidential election on November 3rd, 2020, there are a number of candidates with campaigns on the ground looking for volunteers to help get the word out about the candidate. This doesn't mean that to



be involved you have to choose a campaign to support. There are a number of advocacy and lobbying groups that work to get laws passed on specific issues who need people willing to spread the word, phone bank, or work events. There are also often protests, walk outs,

and marches open to all who are interested. If you're wondering what you can do to support your cause, this article will provide you with several examples of people who are actively aiding their political causes and are eager to help others to do the same.

Ella Gianino ('21) is a volunteer for the Kamala Harris campaign. She found this opportunity through the Young Democrats of America, a group for Democrats aged 14 to 36. Gianino is a part of a subgroup, the High School Democrats. She explained that she chose to volunteer because she's, "always been really interested in politics; I think it's a really important part of our society," and Harris is her favorite candidate.

By participating in the High School Democrats and volunteering for the Harris campaign, Gianino has had access to a variety of exclusive events and opportunities. These opportunities have included invitations to the State Democratic Convention, a house party with Pete Buttigieg and his husband, Chastin, and Democratic debate watch parties. Gianino said, "we literally just played cornhole with [Buttigieg] and it was just for [the High

School Democrats]. It was really cool because there were like fifty of us there, and it was a really cool experience."

To help with the Harris campaign, Gianino often does phone banking. Phone banking for a campaign means that supporters will call constituents to have a conversation about the candidate with them. This may mean discussing whether they intend to vote, who they intend to vote for, and why the volunteer believes that their candidate is the right choice. Phone banking, along with canvassing (same concept, but door to door), are popular ways for volunteers to be involved with campaigns.

While the Young Democrats of America were able to connect Gianino with the Harris campaign, the Young Republicans of America is only open to people aged 18 to 40. If you're under eighteen and interested in volunteering for a Republican candidate or connecting with your local organizer to learn about events to support that candidate, their websites usually include information about how you can get involved or a channel to contact the campaign.

If you were a University of New Hampshire (UNH) student interested in connecting with the Pete Buttigieg presidential campaign, you would reach Shoshana Kaplan, the organizer for the campaign. As an organizer, part of Kaplan's job is to find local people interested in learning more about Buttigieg, talk with them, connect them with events like debate watch parties and the New Hampshire Democratic Convention, and organize them to volunteer for the campaign. She's one of those people you see wearing campaign shirts hanging out in various businesses in downtown Durham, working intently on her laptop or starting conversations about voting and "Mayor Pete," as Buttigieg is often referred to. Until recently, she was also the organizer for Durham and the surrounding towns, including high school students. Now, she focuses solely on UNH and works with college students daily.

Even before she was helping others support Mayor Pete, Kaplan was actively involved in campaigning. In an interview, Kaplan spoke to how working on a campaign has influenced her personally and why she believes campaigning can be so meaningful. She said, "having those door to door conversations and having those conversations with people that live in their community and hearing what matters to them is really significant."

Kaplan went on to say, "everyone has their own story and you don't get to hear perspectives outside of that story. So, I think it's important for young people to understand that when they go to their secondary school or when they get their jobs they're going to meet people from all different backgrounds. This way you actually get to meet people and hear their stories and see how their stories have shaped their values and have shaped what they need in politics from our leaders."

While today she appreciates all the skills she's gained, Kaplan hadn't always planned on turning politics into a career. She explained that her focus had been women's rights and she decided to look into campaigning after having repeatedly been told about the valuable skills it can give you. She said, "all I

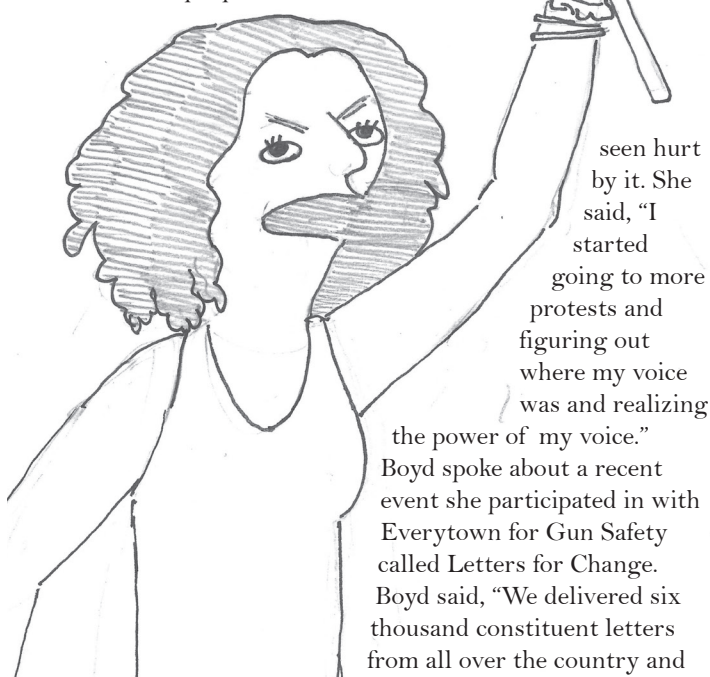
wanted to do was make the world a more accessible place for young women and I kept getting into places that politics were the main scheme.”

She said her experiences, “(campaigning) wasn’t something I knew I needed, but it was something I was very grateful I started doing.”

If you aren’t ready to start working on the campaign trail for any one candidate, but have strong feelings about an issue, there are a variety of lobbying and advocacy groups looking for volunteers and supporters. Everytown for Gun Safety, the National Rifle Association, the National Right to Life, and the Climate Reality Project are all examples of organizations that focus on specific issues and offer opportunities for people to join or volunteer.

Everytown for Gun Safety has a subgroup specifically for middle school, high school, and college students who are passionate about passing stricter gun control laws called Students Demand Action. Rebecca Boyd is a student at George Mason University who volunteers for Students Demand Action and is considering turning politics into a career. She wasn’t always involved in politics like this, although she had always held more Democratic views than her peers in her in her Georgia home. Boyd said, “I was always pretty interested in politics but didn’t feel like I was in a space where I could be open about that because there was a lot of backlash towards people with views like mine. So when the shooting at Parkland happened and it came to organizing our walkout, that’s where I started getting involved.”

Boyd started by lobbying and phone banking for Students Demand Action because she felt it was her duty to work towards stricter gun control laws for people whom she’s



had thirty Senate meetings. It was just an incredible day.” Boyd said, while there are high schoolers in her chapter of the organization, “hopefully this year we can get more involved with our high school students and recruit them up to the college level because they’re making a lot of really powerful change.”

She emphasized that in this line of work, conversation and connection is especially important because, “you can’t fight for people if you don’t really know their needs and if you don’t really know the people you’re fighting for.”

Boyd explained that when working with people who have a lot of strong opinions and big personalities, as many people this passionate do, organization can be frustrating because everyone has their own strong ideas. She advised others who face this frustration to do what she does. “Just remember why you’re there and always keep in your mind one or two people who have personally affected [you].”

Another way to influence politics without voting is through grassroots activism. According to ThoughtWorks, “Grassroots activism is about mobilizing a group of people, who are passionate about a cause and harnessing the power of their conviction to push for a different outcome.” In other words, if you can’t find an organization that supports your cause or a candidate you want to support, you can do it yourself. Often this means protesting, talking to your representatives, and utilizing social media.

Amy Janscy (’20) is vegan and often protests animal cruelty, factory farming, and raises awareness about how a plant based diet can help climate change. Janscy said, “we obviously have to push for climate policy, which is huge. But switching to a more plant based or vegan diet is the single most effective thing that one person can do to reduce their carbon footprint.”

Janscy said that she often does animal advocacy, and animal activism including tabling, putting up posters, and talking to people. She also suggests resources like documentaries when people are curious about her diet. Janscy said that she organizes most of her activism and advocacy by herself or with a group of friends.

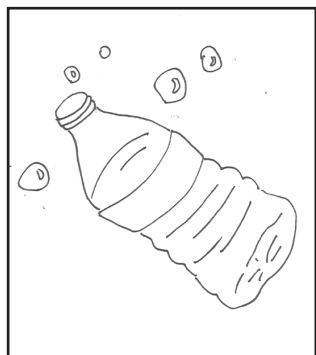
Janscy said, “I think it’s important to do grassroots activism because it’s so easy, anybody can do it. You don’t have to be involved in a group. There’s no excuses. Learn about a topic that you care about and do something with it.”

Not being old enough to vote hasn’t stopped Janscy or Gianino, it didn’t stop Boyd, and it doesn’t have to stop you. Kaplan said of Buttigieg, “he wants to listen to every single person whether or not they can vote because they are still a person in this country.” So speak up if you have an opinion you want heard. You can make people listen to you long before you’re able to vote, and impact others far beyond your vote. **M**

- Susanna Serrano
Artwork by Jane Schwadron

While reporting on this story I contacted the National Right to Life, the National Republican Committee, the New Hampshire Republican Party, and the Chris Sununu campaign through the “Contact” or “Contact Us” pages on their website, and did not receive a reply. Additionally, I messaged the New Hampshire Republican Party on Instagram and did not receive a reply. I also attempted to contact the national Donald Trump campaign through several avenues and was unable to reach them.

The Origins of Plastic



“People don’t realize the sustainable origins of plastic,” said Brunda Katikireddy (‘20), a member of Oyster River High School’s (ORHS) sustainability club.

Today, it’s pretty much common knowledge that our immense production, use, and disposal of plastic is having a negative effect on our ecosystem. However, most people don’t know about the different types of plastic

and how our improper recycling of them is causing the demise of the global recycling industry. The ORHS sustainability club is working to not only bring awareness to this issue but to implement a new system of recycling throughout the Oyster River school district.

Starting this year, the ORHS sustainability club is focusing all of its attention on the plastic problem at hand. ORHS Biology teacher and advisor of the sustainability club, Jon Bromley, expressed his thoughts on how the sustainability club is going to do this. “I think we need to focus on changing minds and hearts and people’s behavior around sustainability issues,” said Bromley. “I think we can end up talking about specific things that need to be accomplished and we can try to target and do little projects that solve a problem but our experience has shown us that to really accomplish something you have to change minds and hearts.”

The immediate action the sustainability club is taking to reach this long term goal was described by the Youth Justice

Leadership grant request written by Bromley along with Maggie Morrison, the district sustainability coordinator. “This grant will be used to implement a yearlong student-led study and audit into the ORCSD’s use of single-use plastic.” The sustainability club submitted a proposal on October 10th, 2019 for a \$500 grant to achieve their goals.

The long term goal of the sustainability club is to eliminate single-use plastic. Don’t get it twisted though, they’re not taking away your yogurt containers and banning all plastic. The club is figuring out a way to rework the system so that recycling the right way is easy, and using food contaminated disposable plastics isn’t the only option.

Alex Freid (‘09), an original member of the Oyster River sustainability club and founder of a non-profit organization called the Post Landfill Action Network (PLAN), put it best when he described PLAN’s goal to get rid of single-use plastic. “Our perspective is that a zero-waste lifestyle today is really difficult because the system doesn’t exist to make that possible. In many ways the work that we do is we look at what are the systems that facilitate disposability and how do we change those systems that then facilitate reusability. How do we build the system so that people don’t have to think twice about whether or not they’re taking a recyclable product?”

In a National Geographic article titled, “We Made Plastic. We Depend on it. Now We’re Drowning in it.” the origin story of plastic is explained. During the mid-1800s objects like piano keys, combs and billiard balls were made from elephant ivory. In 1867, a New York billiard company offered \$10,000 to anyone who could find a substitute. While attempting to create a substitute, inventor John Wesley Hyatt was the first to create modern-day plastic. Although he was never awarded the prize money

“The answer to this challenge is that we need to completely eliminate non-recyclable disposable plastics.”

because the substance he created was too soft for billiard balls, Hyatt started what could be referred to as the plastic revolution.

A Ted-Ed lesson, “What Really Happens to the Plastic You Throw Away” by educator Emma Bryce, explains that plastic has strong carbon bonds which cause it to take between 500 to 1,000 years to break down. However, most plastics don’t biodegrade and instead break down into microplastic: pieces of plastic that are smaller than five millimeters. The study, “A global inventory of small floating plastic debris,” done by Erik van Sebille, et al, in 2015, found that there are over fifty-one trillion microplastic particles in the ocean. If possible, those particles could rotate there eternally.

These pieces of microplastic travel throughout the food chain by being consumed by various marine life until, eventually, it lands on our plates. Microplastic has been found in over 114 species, according to an article titled, “In a First, Microplastics Found in Human Poop” from National Geographic, and has shown signs of possible damage to the liver and reproductive system in many species of marine life. Microplastics have been found in honey, sea salt, beer, tap water, and household dust. In a previous MOR article “Plastic Pollution” by Joe Morell(’20), Morell goes in-depth about microplastics and their effect on the environment.

While microplastics affect us from the smaller end of the spectrum, the global recycling industry’s intimidatingly large and complex system has a more present and obvious effect.

Freid explained that the recycling industry can be broken down into three parts. We’re all familiar with step one: use a bottle, place it in a recycling bin, and leave it for a company to pick up and bring to a facility. The facility sorts all of the recycled material so that they can sell the same type of product to a company who’ll buy those recycled products. According to Freid, all of our recycled material ends up in a facility in Boston known as the Material Recovery Facility or MRF for short. This facility processes 700 tons of metal, paper, plastic, and other various materials a day.



In step two, a company, say CarbonLite, buys a truckload of the same material, which in this case would be plastic. Their job is to break this material down so that it’s able to sell in the third step. Described by Bryce, the plastic is squeezed flat and then compressed into a block. The blocks are shredded into tiny pieces that are washed and melted to become pellets that can then be reused.

The pellets are sold to a company that makes certain products. “This company has the option of buying plastic pellets that come directly from the earth. Those pellets were pulled out of the earth as oil and refined into plastic pellets. This gives companies the option of buying plastic that’s brand new or they can buy plastic that comes from a recycling facility,” said Freid.

The brand new plastic pellets are significantly cheaper than recycled plastic, which makes convincing companies to buy the older, but more sustainable plastic challenging, especially when the recycled plastic is contaminated. Plastics become contaminated when they’re covered in food or mixed in with plastic without an assigned number. As described by Freid, not every piece of plastic can be recycled. The numbers on the bottom of plastic objects determine how they’re organized when shipped off to facilities that process recycled material. When we put

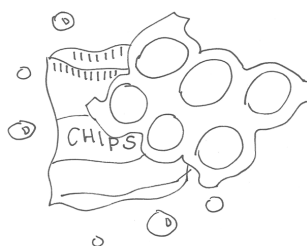


plastic without a number into a recycling bin thinking it can be recycled, it’s mixed in with all of the recyclable material and contaminates it, which, in turn, decreases its value. The same goes for products like a plastic salad bowl. It may be recyclable but if it’s coated in salad dressing it becomes contaminated.

Freid explained what we need to do in order to stop this cycle. “The answer to this challenge is that we need to completely eliminate non-recyclable disposable plastics. Things like K-Cups are causing the entire demise of the global recycling industry. Things like plastic silverware that don’t have a number

to them, are causing the entire demise of the global recycling industry. Because when plastic silverware winds up in the recycling bin, it makes it so that the number one recyclable bottle and the piece of paper that you put in the bin, isn’t recyclable anymore,” said Freid.

Although the sustainability club has their hands full attempting to reduce the school’s single-use plastic, Freid has high hopes for Oyster River, “in the next five to ten years we will see society start to shift away from all disposable plastics. I think Oyster River is a school that has always led the way and they should continue to do so.” **M**



- Isabella Crocco
Artwork by Hannah Jeong

Why Are You Going to College?



Unless you're a daughter of Lori Loughlin or a descendant of a Yale alumni, you're probably stressed about college. During junior year, the pressure of figuring out the next five years of our lives kicks into high gear. As if preparing for the SATs and keeping a high GPA isn't stressful enough, it's as if everyone has an opinion on how high schoolers shape

their future.

Contributing to the stress of finding the perfect college, the cost of tuition rises each year. According to research from the College Board, expenses like housing, food, books, and transportation make the average cost of one student's college experience at least \$26,290 per year. Spending the next ten or so years paying it off doesn't sound very appealing, and yet in 2017, 10.8 million students choose to pay the price. You could argue that it's for education, but if that was the case students would be aware of the option the majority of us have been overlooking: community college.

The first two years of college are usually spent in general education classes. Instead of paying thousands of dollars for advanced versions of the classes you took in high school, community colleges offer what's called a two and two.

A two and two is an option provided by community colleges that allow students to transfer over to a four-year college after completing their general education classes. College outreach specialist Angela Castonguay, who works with students to help find the best colleges for them and make the process less overwhelming, further explained the two and two process.

"Many students are unsure when they start out what they want to study, and all four-year degrees require general education courses. By starting at a community college you can take your general education courses for the first two years and then once you know what you want to study you can take those courses at a four-year school of your choice," said Castonguay.

If you choose to do a two and two, all your general education credits transfer to the four-year college so you're able to take classes geared towards the profession you're interested in. When you graduate, there's nothing on your diploma that mentions your attendance at community college.

The stigma surrounding community college makes it seem like a school for students who aren't smart enough to get into a four-year college. Castonguay puts the community college stigma to shame by saying, "there isn't anybody I think community college is wrong for."

A year ago if you had asked me if I was going to college I would have answered yes. I also would have told you that I planned to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston. That is, of course, before I received my first paycheck and realized just how much money \$73,000 is.

I had never even considered the idea of going to a community college until my friend, Giovanna Acioli, a junior at Dover High School, brought it up in conversation we were having about our overwhelming fear of college. She told me that she didn't understand why community college was seen as a joke.

"Right away I noticed a huge stigma around community college," said Acioli, who moved here from her home in Rio de Janeiro, where college is tuition free, a little over a year ago.

"One of the reasons I'm here is to get the opportunity to have a better education," said Acioli, acknowledging the lack of commitment the school systems in Brazil have to its students and their education.

Acioli explained that she never expected to witness the

"There isn't anybody I think community college is wrong for."

downsizing of an educational opportunity in the U.S., especially from students. Commenting on the impact of the stigma she said, "I've never experienced such negative energy around a seemingly great opportunity."

Although I haven't completely ruled out Berklee, completing my general education classes at community college and then transferring sounds more appealing than any of the template letters I've received from various four-year colleges. Thinking back to the stack of letters, the only reason I can think of attending a four-year college during the time I'd be taking my required general education classes is on-campus living. This then poses the question: Is having the opportunity to live with the people I go to school with and build friendships that last a lifetime an experience I'm willing to miss out on?

Four-year colleges provide students with an opportunity to connect with classmates and experience living away from home. They offer a wide variety of courses and can connect you to companies providing students with internships for careers you're considering pursuing.

Sophie Rogers ('19), a freshman at Bishops University in Quebec, Canada, commented on her reasoning for attending a four-year university. "I think the benefits of a four-year college are, of course, a good education but also building relationships and getting to know so many people and experience so many things," said Rogers.

The college experience is a topic my parents never get tired of talking about. I'm sure you've heard your parents rave about how college was the best time of their lives and how they wish they could go back. Here's where my Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO) kicks in and begs me to enroll in any university that offers a guaranteed good time. But is my fear of missing out enough reason to send myself into thousands of dollars of debt?

One of the drawbacks of community college is that there's no on-campus housing, so you have to commute.

Ryan Merrill ('19), a freshman at Manchester Community College commented on the downsides. "One small disadvantage of community college, I'd say, is the social aspect. This is just because you don't always have events or people are only on campus for classes. Sometimes your only opportunity to talk to people is when you see them on campus," said Merrill

This also means that you can kiss the infamous frat house parties goodbye seeing as there's no greek life at community college. Although this difference between four-year and community college is one factor that makes four-year colleges so much more appealing, it's also a \$20,000 difference. According to a study done by

the College Board, dormitory housing can cost up to \$10,089 a year. If the classic college experience is what you desire, maybe it's worth the price.

Of course, if you're unable to live at home while attending community college the price will vary depending on where you plan on staying.

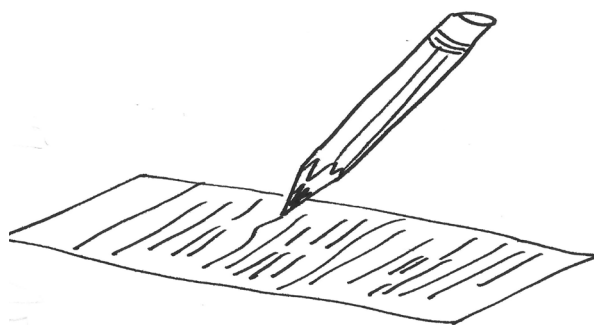
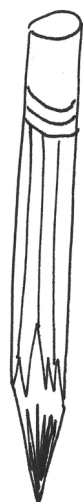
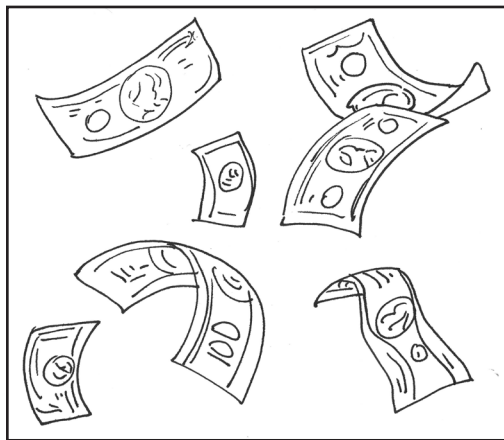
If you're still confused about what you want your major to be or what career you want to pursue, attending a community college may be just what you need in order to explore your interests without the stress of throwing your savings away. Giving yourself time to grow and figure out life is something more students should do before making the transition into college.

"High school students should know that you still have plenty of options coming out of community college. Whether it's pursuing your education further or going right into a career,

the doors are still wide open," said Merrill.

There are success stories from all across the board. Whether you drop out of high school or attend Harvard Law, success all comes down to how hard you're willing to work. Kim Cassamass, one of the school counselors at ORHS, added her thoughts about the importance of what you do after high school. "If you're determined, it doesn't matter where you go, or what that degree says, it's all about your work ethic," said Cassamass.

I'm still clueless when it comes to what I'm doing after high school, but I'm keeping all my options open and I suggest you do the same. **M**



-Isabella Crocco
Artwork by Hannah Jeong



Now Please Stand for the Pledge of Allegiance

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

This is what is recited at the beginning of each day by millions of students throughout the country.

As a 17-year-old boy with a growing opinion, I've chosen to take a seat during the Pledge of Allegiance because I do not fully agree with the Pledge's words. There are also no laws that force me to stand, which allows me to make the decision to sit on my own.

Don't get me wrong, I don't have anything against the United States. I just hope to see a change large enough to make me want to stand and pledge my allegiance to my country every morning, and I don't think that change has happened yet. Personally, I don't have any reasons to stand, as I believe that the country needs to be much more stable politically in order for me to truly appreciate it. However, I completely understand that others do, and those reasons are important to them. Everybody thinks differently and if they choose to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance due to their beliefs and opinions, I completely understand.

A lot of students choose to stand for family members that have served or currently serve in the military. "My dad was in the Air Force for 24 years," says Kelly Merrill ('21), a student at ORHS. "I feel that I have to repay him in small ways, as well as big ways, and one of the small ways I can do it is standing for the Pledge of Allegiance," added Merrill.

ORHS is home to many students with strong political views, along with young voices that want to be heard. Many of these students choose to sit rather than stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance for various reasons. Hannah Grass ('20) explains why she chooses to sit. "If there was an unarmed black man who was shot, then no, I'm not going to stand up and pledge my allegiance to this country," she says.

I don't have a strong opinion on whether or not students need to stand or sit, but I do believe that all students deserve a choice, and I think it should be easier for students to make that decision.

"I think that students should do what they feel comfortable doing," says Suzanne Filippone, Oyster River High School's Principal. "I hope there isn't any implication that we expect everybody to stand, like it's an obligation," she added.

Many of the students that have chosen to sit during the Pledge have simply decided to do so silently. More and more students are sitting during the Pledge and without it being addressed, it makes it harder for students to make this decision.

We were basically forced to rise in lower grades every time the voice rang over the school, telling us to stand. I don't know if it was due to curriculum or opinion, but in elementary school, you got in trouble with your teacher if you didn't stand, even if it was just because you were busy with some other task, which I

believe is not the teacher's place at all.

The social pressure of continuing these norms keeps us standing unless we find a solid reason that we choose not to. However even when students make that decision, they still receive backlash for their differences in opinion.

The repetition of standing leads up to today, where so many more people stand rather than sit, just because they've been doing it throughout their entire education. However, the idea of breaking this routine came with the popularity of being different.

I feel as though a big sign of our country's patriotism slowly decreasing was the summer of 2016 when Colin Kaepernick, a former quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, took a knee during the National Anthem at the final preseason game.

"He did it on the field in front of millions of people and since football is such an 'American' thing, I think that's when it all started," says Grass.

Since then, I feel as if politics in general have spiked in the United States. Obviously we've always dealt with arguments about opposing opinions, but I feel like this was the moment that I began hearing more about political figures and issues. I think this boom of politics is what really helped youth get involved and make decisions of their own, form their own opinion, and speak their mind more openly.

The 1st Amendment allows all people to speak their opinion without consequence and we cannot be forced to say the Pledge of Allegiance, because that would take away our freedom of speech. Being in the United States, we have the opportunity to speak out about these issues because we are one of the countries in the world with an act such as freedom of speech. The option of choice itself is something we should be grateful for.

Because of the freedom our country offers, I was able to make the decision to sit during the Pledge of Allegiance, but I still want to feel confident after making that choice. Most of the time I do, but there's a moment after the rest of the class stands up in which they all turn to you and realize that you're sitting. It's an alienating feeling.

I don't want to feel guilty sitting even though it's what I believe in, and the country isn't going to fall apart without my participation in the Pledge of Allegiance. I appreciate our country and the rights that I'm granted, I just hope to see it reach a place that I can be proud of before I decide to stand every morning and state how much I care about the United States along with the rest of my peers. **M**



-Riley Brown

Climbing Kili

He woke up at midnight, the temperature hovering around zero degrees. Sliding out of his sleeping bag, he broke down his tent at Barranco Camp and started moving towards the summit. Under the light of the moon, he climbed towards Stella Point, the second highest point on the African continent, the harsh alpine tundra in stark contrast to the vast plains of the Serengeti that lay almost 17,000 feet below.

Climbing under the stars, he reached Stella point at six in the morning, staying to watch the sun rise above the massive expanse that lay below him. His morale boosted by the light, he marched on, climbing higher and higher into the red zone. The oxygen became thinner and thinner, the freezing air burning his lungs with every breath.

As he climbed above 19,000 feet, it started to feel real. He hiked along Mweka Ridge to Uhuru Peak, the sun starting to warm the air ever so slightly.

Upon reaching the summit, he was overcome with a mix of joy and relief as he stood on the roof of Africa. He took a minute to soak it all in, before turning around and quickly descending back to the bustling city of Moshi, a quick, two-day journey from the top.

On June 18, 2019, Marlon Grandy ('20) embarked on a 16 day journey to Tanzania, an incredibly rich cultural experience centered around the monumental climbing of Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa.

For Grandy, already a seasoned traveler, it was a life changing journey. "I knew I wanted to do something different for a summer program," he said. "I knew I wanted it to be something that exposed me to a culture so different from my own, and something that would push me physically, so I did some digging and found a program that inspired me."

"It was all Marlon," said Grandy's mother, Sarah Grandy. "I remember him walking down the stairs one morning and saying 'I'm gonna climb Kilimanjaro.'"

After flying halfway across the world, Grandy met up with the 11 other students on the trip, and traveled to the city of Moshi, at the base of Kilimanjaro. The beginning, Grandy said, was all about cultural experience.

Grandy and the other students stayed in Moshi for a few days, learning about the history of the region, ecotourism on Kilimanjaro's slopes, and local agriculture.

"We were cooking with old grandmas and learning the history of the Chagga tribe (one of the region's native tribes that built their society into the side of Kilimanjaro)," said Grandy. "It

was super cool learning their life outlook. Every single Tanzanian I met was super focused on being happy, and it's something I carry with me when thinking about life."

After six days exploring Moshi and the surrounding region, the main event began, the six day trek to Uhuru Peak.

Starting at Mweka Gate, only a few miles from Moshi, the group took their first steps towards the summit. As they hiked towards the peak, the vast Serengeti quickly transformed into lush tropical rainforest.

Kilimanjaro is one of the most biodiverse mountains on the planet, with five distinct climate zones on its slopes.

After two and a half days of climbing, they reached Barranco Camp, elevation 15,318 ft.

"We reached Barranco camp around lunchtime," said Grandy. "We ate lunch, then took a nap before waking up to eat dinner, before going back to sleep again. We woke up again at 11 at night, ate some porridge, and then starting summiting at midnight."

Often, mountaineers will start the final ascent to the summit at midnight, in hopes of reaching the summit at sunrise. Grandy and his group were planning to do just that, and then hike the final, more treacherous mile along Mweka Ridge to Uhuru Peak during the full light of day.

"It was a crazy thing to see, climbing in the pitch black, following a trail of headlights under the stars," Grandy said.

"When we arrived to Stella Point, it was genuinely the most beautiful thing I had ever seen," said Adam Boesky, one of Grandy's friends on the trip. "At Stella Point, you can see Uhuru Peak, but also all of the hard miles you walked to get to that point."

They moved on from Stella Point as the sun rose higher into the sky. Finally, after four hard days of climbing, they reached the summit.

They spent less than fifteen minutes on the roof of Africa. No time to really let it sink in. That would come later. They started rushing down the mountain, completing the four day trek to the summit in one and a half days.

Two days after returning to Moshi, Grandy was on a plane back home, flying across the ocean to a world he would never see the same.

"[The trip] felt like a jumping off point for more adventurous and really technical climbs such as Denali or Meru," said Grandy. For him, this is just the beginning. **M**

- Luca Haines

Photo by Marlon Grandy



COOPERATIVE TEAMS

If you're looking to attend an ORHS football, girls hockey, boys lacrosse or girls lacrosse game this year, you'll notice that Oyster River students aren't the only ones sporting the Bobcat uniform.

Since 2016, students from Portsmouth High School also have had the opportunity to play girls hockey at Oyster River. Starting in the fall of 2018, Oyster River High School students have had the opportunity to play on the Portsmouth-Oyster River Clipper-Cats football team. If approved by the NHIAA, starting this spring Newmarket students will be able to play for the girls and boys lacrosse teams. For more info on the lacrosse co-op, check out Susanna Serrano's article "Oyster River and Newmarket Lacrosse Join Forces" on mor. news.

Co-op teams exist all over the state of New Hampshire, especially in sports like hockey and football that have lower participation and are more costly than other sports, according to ORHS Athletic Director Andy Lathrop. So what do athletes really think about playing on the same team as kids from a different school?

Alec Damsell ('20) has been on the Clipper-Cats football team since the school district approved allowing ORHS students to play for Portsmouth High School. Damsell says that on his team, the bonds created between teammates are just as strong as any other team that he's been a part of. "It is really interesting to see how the two communities interact. They're kind of separate, but there's also a togetherness that I don't think you'd find with just a one school team. The bonds you form on a co-op team are just as strong and legitimate as any non co-op team, if you put in the work to reach a common goal."

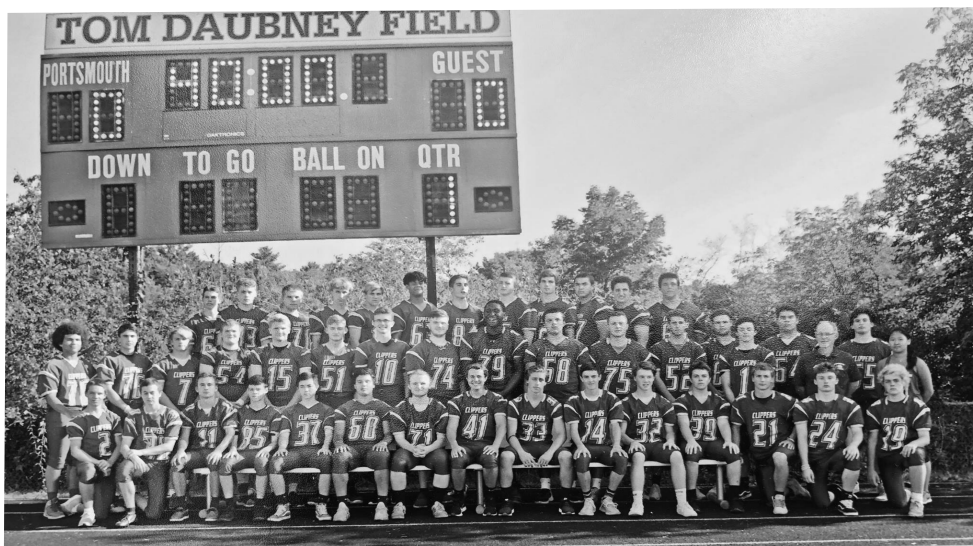
Logan Flynn ('20) is one of Damsell's teammates and plays for both the co-op football team and the school baseball team.

Flynn said that the Clipper-Cats were really welcoming to the Oyster River players. "They did a good job of taking us in with open arms and teaching us what we needed to know and putting us on an accelerated path to catch up with them."

So far, Lathrop has seen a lot of benefits of having cooperative teams. One of the benefits is that it allows athletes to play with kids that they wouldn't usually play with. "It's cool

"The bonds you form on a co-op team are just as strong and legitimate as any non co-op team, if you put in the work to reach a common goal."

to see that comradery between two schools that probably play against each other in other sports, and then come together and are one team in another sport... I think there's been some good friendships developed out of these and opportunities for kids to meet other kids."



Laura Dreher ('20) has played on the Clipper-Cats girls' ice hockey team and ORHS field hockey team since her freshman year. Dreher felt that the general distance between teammates makes things on a co-op team difficult. Dreher added that team bonding activities that build

team community such as spags or after school activities are a lot harder on the ice hockey team compared to the field hockey team, due to players living further away.

Distance can be seen as an issue for the football team as well. When it comes to difficulties with a co-op team, Dam-

sell's only issue is having to drive 20 minutes to practice every day after school. Flynn also saw the time commitment as the biggest issue. Flynn said that in addition to driving forty minutes total to and from Portsmouth, the practices usually last two and a half hours.

Another thing Flynn saw as an issue is that he couldn't play until his junior year, causing him to miss two years of development. "It's a bummer that some of us went in halfway through our high school careers because we were just kind of behind, and it's hard to get a starting job that way."

While there may be issues with the cooperative team, when asked if he wished the school had its own football team, Damsell didn't have a definite answer. "Yes and no. Yes because it would make transportation a lot better, but then I wouldn't have ever met all of my current teammates."

Damsell discussed what he believed the school district should do to improve the situation. "What I would like is for the

Oyster River School District to pay for us to play over at Portsmouth." Currently, the cost for Oyster River students playing football at Portsmouth is \$500 a year. According to Lathrop, this is due to the cooperative agreement with Portsmouth. Currently, no other sports at Oyster River, other than ice hockey because of the cost of ice, and skiing because it's not school funded, require any payment.

Flynn said he would prefer the one school format to the

"...girls were crying because they would play the whole game and wouldn't get any subs. They wanted these new players so badly because they needed more people."

co-op, as he feels it would be easier. "You see the guys every day in school so you can stay in communication with them. They do a really good job at Portsmouth with communicating with us, but we're at the back end of it sometimes and it's kind of a pain."

Another reason he would prefer the school to have their

own team is the competition level and size. Currently, the Clipper-Cats play in Division I, but if the school had its own team, it would play in Division II as does every other ORHS team. "I would much rather play D2 or D3 where our biggest kids match up with their biggest kids. At Oyster River, probably the biggest kid in the school is like an average-sized lineman at Portsmouth." Due to a shortage in participation, Oyster River doesn't have their own team.

For the ice hockey team, Dreher is happy that the team decided to combine with Portsmouth. This is because if the school had its own team, the roster would be very short. "Before we took in Portsmouth we had barely any players...

girls were crying because they would play the whole game and wouldn't get any subs. They wanted these new players so badly because they needed more people." Dreher said she prefers the one school style, but the numbers make it a necessity to have a co-op ice hockey team.

ORHS is the lead school in ice hockey, but

not football. This means for the hockey team that Oyster River is responsible for all of the day to day operations of the sport. Lathrop also added that the main reason for the hockey team, the co-op is there to keep the sport at the school. Without the co-op, there would be a potential for the team to not have enough players for a full team.

In order for a cooperative team to happen, the two schools have to apply for an application with the NHIAA. The application has to be approved by each sports committee, the classification committee and then the council. Lathrop said that this process hasn't been a difficult one. "The NHIAA and the standing committees are very supportive of keeping sports. They don't want teams to dissolve because they don't have numbers, and that's why those cooperatives are there." Lathrop noted that cooperative teams are rarely denied.

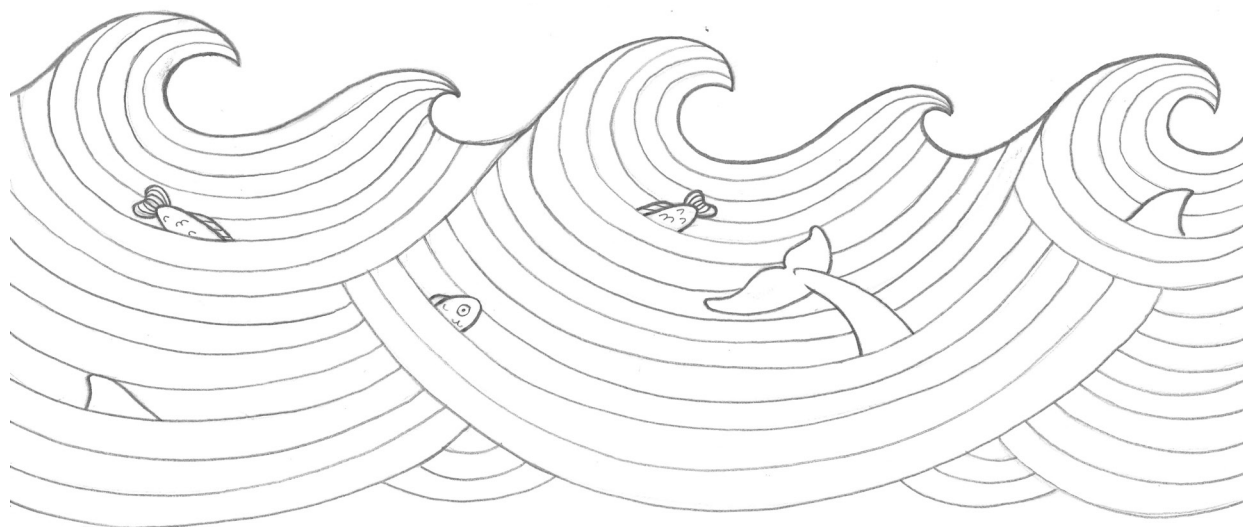
Lathrop added that if participation grew exceedingly, there would be a possibility for one of the co-op agreements to end. "If you have enough numbers that you're fielding JV and freshman teams they're not going to approve your co-op." However, Lathrop doesn't see any of the co-ops disbanding in the near future. **M**



- Alden Swiesz

Images courtesy of ORHS and PHS Football

OYSTER RIVER'S SURFING COMMUNITY



As the new school year rolls in, surfers at Oyster River High School had the chance to better their skills over the summer by working with their peers. Aidan Janetos and his friends have built a small community of ORHS student surfers that has almost doubled over the summer. The community allows surfers to come together and share their common passion out on the waves.

Aidan Janetos ('21) has made surfing a huge part of his life and can surf up to 30 hours a week, which sometimes includes waking up at 4:00am to surf before school. Janetos has been surfing since he was 8 years old, but really came into the sport within the last couple of years. Since then he has worked hard to not only get better himself, but to help other aspiring surfers get started as well.

The Oyster River surfing community is a group of students who talk about waves, conditions, and places to go surfing with each other. This is a way for different people to connect over a shared passion. Janetos has played a huge role in cultivating this surfing community.

Janetos has surfed in places where the communities are drastically different. Janetos learned to surf in New England, which he describes as a supportive and small community. After visiting

places like Kailua and big surfing beaches in California, Janetos seems to be grateful for our smaller community.

Last summer, Janetos visited Kailua, Hawaii, where he had the chance to surf some of the best conditions with the most talented surfers. "I had never seen waves that were that powerful before. On one of the big days I was out, I was in awe of how everyone out there were such great surfers," Janetos shared. "I

think the biggest thing that affected me was being in a place where the surfing community was so present."

Like Janetos, Owen Fleischer ('21) is a dedicated surfer at Oyster River High School and has been focusing on the sport for the last two years. Fleischer and Janetos have been surfing together since the beginning and seem to be the first students who started this Oyster River surfing community.

"I've got to really attribute [building the student surfing commu-

nity] to Aidan, as he's the one who really got me into surfing. He reached out to other people and offered to help take them. So many people have messaged me asking when or where I'm going surfing," explains Fleischer.

Melissa Janetos, Aidan's mother, grew up in California and supports his passion. Once Melissa introduced Janetos to surfing, she was eager to take him to Hawaii. "I think the sport is



so much about being centered and being in the moment, unlike other sports where it's all about being better than somebody else," Janetos' mother said. "In talking to a lot of people in Hawaii who surf, I've learned that this is all they do when they have time. The instructor who Aidan was taking a lesson from explained it was about being in the water and about being present."

Janetos must balance his workload and responsibilities alongside his passion. His mom admits that at times she feels a tear between what Janetos wants to do, and what he has to do. "He's got things to do and he just wants to keep surfing because that's what makes him feel good," she said. "That's why I don't mind him surfing in the morning because I've seen him be more productive, which is amazing if you think about it."



loved it ever since she started. "A lesson is how I first got into it so it was fun giving lessons to kids and seeing that they were totally gonna get into it."

For Sullivan, the Oyster River surf community and New England surf community as a whole are great ways for her to surf with other students and expose herself to the variety of surfers in the area. "The Oyster River surfing community has grown a lot. Before it started there were just three kids I knew who surfed, and now they have brought their friends in,"

she explains.

Vinny Golden('21), is somewhat new to surfing as he mainly picked up the sport this year. Janetos was a huge help for Golden, as he went with him during the summer to help. "[Janetos] is always watching you when you start paddling to get in the

“You’re always trying to find waves which keeps you coming back, and every once in a while when you find one of those good waves, on a really good day, there’s nothing better.”

David Hawley, a teacher at Oyster River High School, is just one of the staff members who surfs in their free time. Hawley first began surfing after college when he moved to New Zealand to ski. "I sold my skis for a surfboard in 1996 and gave it a try for a few months," he recalls. Hawley has seen two very different communities between New Zealand and New England. He describes the New England community as more kind with supporting people, and the New Zealand community as unfair, difficult, and somewhat unwelcoming. "You would get beat up by going on a wave in New Zealand. Not by the wave, but by the people. It was very locally controlled and scary because they were very protective of their territory."

Sophie Sullivan ('21) is another ORHS surfer, who not only surfs in her free time but also worked as a surf instructor at Cinnamon Rainbows Surf in Hampton. "I thought it was so much fun [teaching lessons] because it didn't really feel like a job. I was able to show little kids what I liked the most about surfing," said Sullivan.

Sullivan has been surfing for around four years now and has

wave, and if you're getting up too early or too late he's gonna let you know and that's just been a huge help to me," says Golden. Golden is not the only person that Janetos has taught. Janetos offers to take people who have never gone before, lends them equipment, and helps teach them. Exposing more students to



surfing not only grows the community, but creates a wider and more diverse variety of surfers who can relate over a common topic.

Janetos definitely wants to continue surfing. It's the type of sport that you can take with you as you go and it encourages you to meet new people. Janetos wants to continue to take advantage of the opportunities that New England provides for him. "As I progress more and more, I want to keep surfing more and more," says Janetos.

"Every single day the waves change and everything is different. You're always trying to find waves which keeps you coming back, and every once in a while when you find one of those good waves, on a really good day, there's nothing better." **M**

-Chase Amarosa

Artwork by Aaron Hoag
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